

COVID-19 updates and on campus facilities

Dear students,

I hope you are well and you have been able to enrol or re-enrol smoothly onto your programme this year, whether you can be on campus or you are studying remotely at this time.

Further to my [previous emails](#) about the autumn term, I am writing with an overview of recent COVID-19 related updates as well as information on the range of campus facilities and services available to you this term.

As we have highlighted in previous emails, there are [strict restrictions](#) on social distancing and socialising, which you will need to follow at all times, whether on-campus or elsewhere.

NHS COVID-19 app

You may have seen in the news that the new [NHS COVID-19 app](#) launched on Thursday 24 September. The app is part of Public Health England's large scale coronavirus testing and contact tracing programme called NHS Test and Trace. The app will be used, alongside traditional contact tracing, to notify users if they come into contact with someone who later tests positive for coronavirus.

The NHS COVID-19 App alerts people at risk of coronavirus, asking them to isolate before they potentially pass the virus on to others as well as providing local area alerts and QR venue check-in.

The app will help the NHS understand if the virus is spreading in a particular area, and so local authorities can respond quickly to stop it spreading further and save lives. The app does this while protecting a user's anonymity. Nobody, including the government, will know who or where a particular user is.

Whilst not compulsory, we strongly encourage you to download and make use of the app to 'check in' to buildings using the QR posters displayed around our campuses. See our [blog post](#) for more details.

Catering outlets and shops on campus

This week, the government [announced new restrictions](#) relating to the hospitality sector, which affects our range of on-campus catering outlets. Please [see this link](#) for a detailed overview of venue availability, opening times and whether you'll need to book in advance. You can also find more information on our [hospitality webpages](#).

Planning ahead: Socialising on campus and in Reading

As well as our on-campus facilities, many [venues in Reading](#) are also open in line with government guidance. When considering visiting a pub, bar or restaurant, whether on or off campus, you should:

- pre-book your table in advance, if necessary;
- check opening times;
- bear in mind venues may prefer contactless payments;
- make sure you bring your ID and be prepared to share contact details for NHS Test & Trace purposes and/or check in using the NHS QR codes;
- adhere to social distancing measures;
- limit your group to 6 people;
- plan your travel arrangements home, in advance where possible, bearing in mind that venues will be closing by 10pm.

SportsPark

[Our SportsPark](#) is open (Monday – Friday 7am - 10pm, Weekends 8:45am – 9pm) for indoor and outdoor activity. New measures include socially distanced activity set ups with designated workout areas as well as socially distanced group sessions. We have also introduced COVID-secure protocols including controlled capacities, bookable sessions and increased cleaning and hand hygiene stations.

The SportsPark café, [Refuel](#), is also open (Monday - Friday 10am - 4:30pm, Saturday - Sunday 10am - 4:30pm) serving coffees, healthy hot and cold breakfasts, sandwiches, bagels, pasta and protein shakes.

For more information, to sign up or to book a session visit the [SportsPark website](#).

The Library

Our Library is open for [Click & Collect](#) and [study space](#). Remember that you will need to book a study space in advance, indicating your preferred type of space including PCs, booths and armchairs, depending on availability.

Support Services

Whether you are on campus or studying remotely, in the autumn term we will [continue to offer support remotely](#), with some face-to-face support available where needed. Booking appointments in advance will be important this term, rather than dropping in. This is to help minimise the number of people in buildings at one time.

Our [Support Centres](#) across Whiteknights and London Road campuses are your first point of contact for support and guidance on a range of academic and non-academic topics. The preferred method to get in touch is to [Ask a question](#) online, and you can also contact them by phone, or visit in person. Please remember to book any appointments in advance.

In addition, all our specialist support services including our [Student Welfare team](#), [Counselling & Wellbeing](#), [Disability Advisory Service](#), [Student Financial Support](#) and [International Student Advice](#) continue to provide support on campus and remotely and may require bookings in advance for telephone, online or face-to-face appointments. Visit our [support webpage](#) for details of how our services can support you and how to get in touch.

Please remember to respect others and adhere to all legal requirements and university and government guidance while using our facilities. We will take breaches of the law and of our [own Health & Safety arrangements](#), including of government guidelines, seriously and breaches may lead to disciplinary action being taken under our [Student Disciplinary Procedures](#).

If you haven't already, please familiarise yourself with our guidance on our '[Collective responsibility to keep our community safe](#)', which you must read before you come to campus. We all must take steps to protect ourselves and each other by following the measures outlined.

Please continue to regularly check your University email account and our [Essentials webpages](#) for the latest information and advice. If you have any further queries or need any support please [contact us](#).

Best wishes,
Paddy

Dr Patricia Woodman
Director of Student Services